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COUNTY PUBLICATIONS
HELP PROGRAMS FIT

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California farm and home advisors find their county extension publications are useful tools.

A State policy encouraging these county publications recognizes that they also help the county extension worker become better known in the county and establish the author as an authority.

These locally-produced circulars range in size from one sheet to perhaps 20 pages, and the number of each one issued may be as low as 50 or as high as 1,500. Several hundred different ones are prepared each year.

Such publications have a variety of purposes. One of the most important is to present the results of county cost studies, field tests, and demonstrations. Another aim is to give recommendations, such as a new way of controlling lygus bugs, how to prepare one-dish meals, or suggestions to 4-H Club leaders in regard to a project. At times, these recommendations may be planned mainly to answer frequently asked questions. Some of these small publications supplement the larger State ones with later or localized information.

In preparing these leaflets, county extension workers frequently call on State specialists to assist. In turn, the specialists or administrators may recommend that a county-authored manuscript be issued as a State-wide publication. As many as 20 State circulars or leaflets bearing a farm or home advisor's name as author or coauthor have been issued during a year's time. Quite often the name of a farm advisor, a specialist, and an experiment station worker will appear on either a county or State publication.

The publications usually are mimeographed or offset, with only an occasional one being printed by letterpress. The mimeograph machines belong to the county extension offices in practically all cases, but the office offset machines may be owned and operated either by an extension office or by a county.

While the county publications are of the home-made type, this does not mean that they are dull. They often appear on colored paper and may contain a number of illustrations. Two colors of ink may be used, and with the offset ones photos have an important place. Familiar language is used.

Since the farm and home advisors must serve as their own writers and editors, the State information office offers them sectional and county training conferences and workshops each year. At these training sessions, the county workers generally agree that their most effective publications are brief, readable, attractive, well-organized, timely, and localized.

At such conferences one-sheet helps, prepared by the writer, are distributed. These include Earmarks of an Effective County Publication Use Variety in Your Publication Titles, and Straight Thinking With Publications, along with possible sources for drawings, and also layout sheets. However, much of the value of a meeting is determined by the discussion and ideas presented by county workers.

A typical publication, Grow Your Own Fence Posts, which tells what hardwood trees in Napa County make the best fence posts, describes the experience of one rancher who was a leader in this work, shows how to season the cut timber, and tells how to treat the posts with preservatives. The publication contains 12 pages, is on colored mimeograph paper, and has six drawings.

Fresno County 4-H Clubs is the title of a 20-page mimeographed publication with an offset cover. It gives in brief form an over-all picture of 4-H Club work in that county. The paper used for the cover is green.





